

Queensland State Rally 1998 vs 2009

After only a couple of weeks on a Harley, very different to riding the Royal Interceptor, we were riding in a large Brisbane Hog Group all the way to Rockhampton for a State Rally, a great trip. There were newspapers inside the Jeans (over the knees) after Gympie due to the cold in that morning mist from Cooroy to Curra.

The Rockhampton Rally -98 was out in a paddock 10 minutes out of town with a large function tent, like the ones at weddings. There was fantastic country comfort with local HOG people that weekend, camping and with camp fires. A bottle of Bundy got my old Viking songs in Swedish going. The state of origin was on and a TV setup showed the Maroons losing real big at state of origin, giving cause to drown sorrows. We danced until midnight and I got involved in a pretend fight. It was the second HOG Rally I went on and like the National Rally at the Gold Coast -98, it got me seriously hooked on HOG. Harold Park was the Rockhampton Director this late autumn 1998. Four years later I was to work two years at Ergon in Rockhampton and really get into this great chapter too.

So eleven years on, on the "same" bike and this time with Ann on her own bike, we had a great ride up to Rockhampton. The Rally was very different, but the people and hospitality was still as warm and welcoming as always. From these humble beginnings, the club has now obviously grown to a significant chapter with well earned network of friends, in the Rockhampton Community and throughout the Queensland HOG community. There was somewhere around 662 three day registrations and several dozen day passes on top of this. The local council and police really came to the party to assist in making it such a success.

With a pursuit police car with emergency lights and many police traffic cops, we didn't have to stop once on the Rocky-Yepoon-Emu Park 80 k approx ride and the people of Rockhampton cheered the event on along the way in surprising numbers. Every member of the chapter, and let's not forget the Highland Chapter, put in a lot of work to make this rally such a success. Team work is only possible with the right people, the members, the committee, the sponsor and the council and people of Rocky. You also need, patronage for a great rally. We had chapters from several parts of Queensland and Australia (even New Zealand), came to the party. Many chapters really engaged in the Gymkhana and Thunder run, the coast rivalry (Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast) most noticeable in enthusiasm and really turned the crowds on. Thanks all HOG mates for coming to our party. Ingenuity like picking up "road kill" was new and very different. The cost for these three nights and four days was more like a symbolic donation, when you looked at all you got.

It's a huge credit to all organisers, sponsors and local council support to give so much, the donated bike for the raffle being but one example. Drinks, t-shirts and many other items you could spend money on were the lowest prices I've seen. There were ticks all around for these Rally features. Rally stallholders were good value too. We bought a handmade Australian heavy Duty canvas bag to use as top-box for only \$70.

Finally what we all remember most, are the smiling welcoming faces of all the members from the Rockhampton HOG.

Thanks for a Great Rally.

Royal and Kieckan

Brisbane & Rockhampton HOG members